

The Great War 1189th Day

Italian Defeat May Bring Allied Dictator of Supplies

Need for Concentration of Authority Forcibly Impressed on Entente—American Likely To Be Named for the Place at Paris Conference

By C. W. Gilbert

WASHINGTON, Nov. 1.—Later dispatches from Berlin cause doubt in military circles here whether Cadorna's army will be able to make a successful stand on the Tagliamento. The latest captures of men and guns indicate either a close pursuit by the Austro-Germans or a further turning operation directed against the Italians. English and French aid being on the way, it may be wise for the Italians to fall back until it can reach them and then make their defence at some other river than the Tagliamento, the holding of which seems to be threatened by the presence of the enemy at the bridgeheads.

Allied Troops Reach Italian Front; Find Army Morale Good

WASHINGTON, Nov. 1.—Official advices from Rome to-day state that French and British troops have arrived at the Italian front, and that they have been extended an enthusiastic welcome by the Italian press. The dispatches state that the Allied forces have found the Italian army stronger, both materially and morally, than had been expected by them, considering the reverses sustained in the mountain sectors.

The State Department received a cablegram from Ambassador Page, at Rome, to-day saying the Italian army is retreating in good order, that the enemy pressure has lessened and that all political parties are giving the government their support. These advices coincide with those received in official Italian quarters.

Captain Laberto Vannutelli, naval attaché of the Italian Embassy, expressed the conviction to-day that the next ten days will witness intensive movements on the plains forming the battle area of the present Italo-Austrian front and that the end of this period will disclose a greatly clarified military situation.

Captain Vannutelli, who is a strategist of distinction in the Italian navy and who is familiar with the terrain of the existing front, remarked significantly that "it is not easy to come down to the plains; it is not so easy to get back again," indicating that the Austro-German army may soon find itself in a difficult situation.

The retreating third Italian army, he said, is an offensive army as well, inasmuch as it menaces the left flank of the enemy and is supporting the offensive of the second army. He said that the retreating second army of the front there are very few roads, the mountain passes are narrow and "between the capacity of the enemy's and our own remarkable communication the Austro-Germans, besides excellently constructed roads, have the benefit of railway transportation and a perfected system of canals."

In addition, Captain Vannutelli stated, the Italian army will receive naval support. In the canals heavy guns have been placed on floats, and these batteries, of tremendous power, will have a sweep of the Austro-German positions.

The Italian lines near the coast will also be under the protecting cover of the new, strange monitors with the armament most effectively with the army during the offensive from May to July and which are really floating fortresses.

From Venice to Cervignane by land and from Venice to Grado by sea the Italians enjoy perfect lines of communication. The approach of winter will not interfere with the embarkation and disembarkation of troops, and the communications of the army, Captain Vannutelli said he would not be surprised if the Austrians attempted some diversion at sea at the present time.

Captain Vannutelli characterized the situation as a "war of attrition." He said that the number of persons removed by the enemy, the civilian population of the occupied positions, including old men, women and children. He was sceptical, also, about the number of Austro-German troops reported to be operating against Italy, asserting that the actual number must be less than 1,000,000, because a greater number could not operate on that front.

Rome Expert's View
A dispatch from Rome gives the views of General Corbelli, military critic of the Italian Tribune, on the military situation. The dispatch follows:

"General Cadorna writes that the bulletin of last Wednesday night depicts the situation. The enemy in launching his offensive must have decided on three objectives—one of tactics, one of strategy, and one of policy—deriving the success from the tactical objective. He took advantage of the Tolmino road to break through our lines on the middle lower Isonzo and with a maximum expenditure of effort succeeded in this plan. He hoped to achieve also a political objective in the dissolution of the Italian army and the weakening of the national resistance. The strategic-political objective induced the enemy to employ all the strength he could assemble; otherwise the enormous Austro-German-Turkish-Bulgarian effort could not be explained.

"The enemy, however, has not achieved the result he expected, since the withdrawal of the Italian army was successful. The critic admits that it is unadvisable to be obliged to abandon the advantages acquired during two years of fighting, but he adds, it must be remembered that this is to be expected in modern warfare. In modern warfare it is not ground that determines the issue, but rather the spirit and the equipment of the army.

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With regard to this government's further part in sustaining the morale of Italy, no well informed person here regards a declaration of war upon Austria by the United States as likely. No doubt the moral effect in Italy of such a declaration would be important, but that moral effect may be obtained in other and simpler ways. Nor does any one expect a declaration of war by Austria upon the United States. Germany, it is to be remembered, has not declared war upon this country.

State of War Already Exists

In the mind of the Administration we are at war with Austria. A state of war exists. No other construction can be put upon this government's acts, in sinking or being ready to sink Austrian submarines on sight, in treating Austrian property here on the same basis as German property and in rushing material aid to Italy at the moment when Austrian troops are invading her. Austria may recognize this state of war or not, as she sees fit. If it is necessary to convey to Italy further assurances of our support than have been given, it is pointed out that it will be much easier and quicker to send some of the troops in France to the Italian front than to declare war upon Austria. The Allies, from Lloyd George's announcement, have hastened to send troops in order to assure Italy of their sympathy and support. And it is not unlikely that this country may do the same thing.

At least, it is suggested that it is a more practical way of giving Italy encouragement than would be a declaration of war on Austria, which would require the convening of Congress. At any rate, the anomaly of our relations with the allies of Germany is likely to be ended as a result of the danger of Italy.

Disaster to Affect Italy's Demands

The diplomatic difficulty in the way of our giving aggressive support to

Official Statements

West BRITISH

LONDON, Nov. 1.—East and northeast of Ypres the German artillery was active during the night. In the neighborhood of Passchendaele a hostile concentration was dispersed by our fire.

(NIGHT)—The number of German prisoners captured by the British armies in France during October is 5,125, including 242 officers. We also have taken during the month 15,000 machine guns and 42 trench mortars.

FRANCE
PARIS, Nov. 1.—There is nothing to report except severe actions of some violence in several sectors north of the Aisne, in the region of Les Maisons de Champagne and on the right bank of the Meuse, north of Bezonvaux.

Enemy airplanes bombarded Calais in the night of October 29 and Dunkirk last night. The material damage was of small importance and there were no civilian casualties.

Italian Front GERMAN

BERLIN, Nov. 1 (DAY).—The fact that the development of our operations against Italy has been so successful may be attributed to our rapid blows in the East and to the incomparably stubborn endurance of our troops on all fronts, notably in the West. Yesterday the allied troops of the 14th Army gained a further great victory. Portions of the enemy army made a stand at the Tagliamento.

In the mountains and in the Friuli plain, to the Udine-Codroipo-Trevise railway, the enemy retired, fighting on to the eastern bank of the river. Bridged positions on the eastern bank were held by him near Pinzano, Dignano and Codroipo. He effected a retreat to the Tagliamento, where he effected a crossing to the westward bank of the Tagliamento.

Impelled by the will for victory and capability directed by prudent leadership, the German and Austro-Hungarian corps have gained successes which even in the present war rarely have been attained.

"The bridged positions of Dignano and Codroipo were taken by storm by Prussian Jäger and Bavarian and Württemberg Infantry. Throughout the area of operations tried Brandenburg and Silesian divisions, in irrepressible assault, penetrated from the north the rearward positions of the Italian east of the lower Tagliamento, and drove back the enemy, while the tried Austro-Hungarian corps pressed forward from the Isonzo against the last of the crossings held by the enemy, near Latisana.

Cut off by our thrust from the north and outflanked on both sides, more than 60,000 Italians laid down their arms. The enemy's advance fell into the hands of the victors. The number of prisoners captured during the week of the so-called successful conducted twelfth Isonzo battle is consequently increased to more than 180,000, and the total of guns taken is increased to more than 1,500. The other booty captured is proportionate.

(NIGHT)—On the Tagliamento (Austro-Italian front) the troops of the enemy, who were maintaining themselves on the eastern bank of the river near Pinzano and Latisana, have either been driven back or taken prisoners.

Germans Again Retreat Toward Riga Position

Petrograd Reports Fresh Withdrawal on Northern Russian Front

Other Sections Quiet

Torpedo Boats Destroy Turk Naval Vessel and Battery in Black Sea

LONDON, Nov. 1.—Another German retreat on the Northern Russian front, in the direction of Riga, is indicated by to-day's report from the Petrograd War Office. The statement says the enemy is withdrawing "to positions previously prepared." It adds that the Russians are in constant contact with the German rearwards and that "there are no possible grounds for supposing that this retreat will permit the possibility of the enemy's throwing his troops on to any other front."

The transfer of German forces to the Italian sector undoubtedly had been accomplished long before this latest retreating movement began. Dispatches from many sources declare that the bulk of Mackensen's army now in Venetia is composed of troops withdrawn from the Russian and Rumanian fronts, while many Austrians are also reported to have been transferred for the Italian campaign. A dispatch received two days ago stated that the Austrian front was now being held entirely by men of sixty or more. The Russian War Office is believed to be without adequate information in this respect, as the report suggests.

On the remainder of the Eastern front there were no infantry operations. In the Black Sea, near the Bosphorus, however, two Russian torpedo boats carried out a successful movement in Inada Bay, destroying a Turkish torpedo boat, two steamers and a naval battery, according to the Petrograd report.

Believe One Power Must Dominate

It was suggested to him at once that such unity could only be achieved when some one power dominated the Allied group, as Germany dominates the Central Powers. He agreed to this and said that until some such unified control was accomplished blunders like this one in Italy, waste of supplies through their unwise employment, waste of shipping through its inefficient use, would continue and would imperil the Allied cause.

An opinion such as this is growing in Washington.

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